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**ECONOMICAL VALUE OF RAPHIDES.**—Mr. F. C. S. Roper suggested to the Eastbourne Nat. Hist. Soc. the value of raphides as tests of the genuineness of certain medicinal substances obtained from plants containing them. Though not new, this method of detecting adulterations or falsifications is capable of a greatly increased usefulness.

**PATHOLOGY OF MALIGNANT TUMORS.**—Dr. W. B. Neftel, in a contribution to the Archives of Scientific and Practical Medicine, advocates the doctrine that cancer is primarily a purely local disease, due to mechanical or chemical irritation. Thus we notoriously find it usually originating in localities most constantly subject to such causes. Afterwards it becomes generalized by means of the lymphatics and blood vessels, and affects other and distant organs; and the unsuspected promptness with which this takes place occasions the frequent failure of local curative treatment. The existence of a hereditary disposition to malignant tumors, not in the congenital acquisition of morbid germs, but in the inheritance of a faulty structure or arrangement of tissues or organs, which thus offer less resistance to the causes of disease, is not denied, but is believed to have been greatly exaggerated.

**VITALITY FROM GERMS.**—As a reaction from the always fascinating doctrine that organic germs of various kinds, when introduced into the system of larger animals, have a tendency to cause disease and destruction, it has been recently surmised, without attempt at proof, that such germs may actually impart and increase vitality.

**OBITUARY.**—Mr. James How, a well known philosophical instrument maker of London, formerly with George Knight and Son, of London, and lately successor to them, died suddenly, Dec. 8, 1872. Mr. How will be remembered for his skill in the use of the microscope, but especially for his prominence among those who took the lead in introducing students' microscopes of good quality and cheap price.

## NOTES.

THE meeting of the American Association at Portland next month bids fair to be one of the largest held for several years, and we understand that quite a number of titles of papers to be

read have already been entered. A number of the older members of the association, several of whom were unable to attend the western meetings, have intimated their intention to be present, which will add much to the scientific results of the session. The entomologists are also anticipating a full attendance, and anthropology will probably be well represented, while geology and general zoology will unquestionably be maintained in their usual force. Botany has for many years been but slightly represented, to the regrets of workers in other fields. Will not the botanists show their force this year? Section A will probably be largely represented, as heretofore, by many distinguished scientists. Particulars relating to the meeting are given in our advertising pages.

At the late Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Science and Arts, Boston, Prof. Asa Gray resigned the chair of President which he had held for the past ten years. The following officers were elected:—*President*, Hon. Charles Francis Adams; *Vice President*, Prof. Joseph Lovering; *Cor. Sec'y*, Prof. J. P. Cooke, Jr; *Rec. Sec'y*, Prof. E. C. Pickering; *Treasurer*, H. G. Denney; *Librarian*, Edmund Quincy; *Council*: Class I, Prof. Benj. Peirce, Prof. Wolcott Gibbs and J. B. Henck; Class II, Alex. Agassiz, Prof. Asa Gray (in place of Prof. J. Wyman who declined reelection), and Dr. Charles Pickering; Class III, Rev. G. E. Ellis, Hon. R. C. Winthrop and Prof. A. P. Peabody.

SCIENCE in Europe has met a great loss in the recent deaths of Baron Liebig, the distinguished chemist, and of De Verneuil, the French geologist and associate of Sir R. I. Murchison in the geological survey of Russia.

Lastly, who will say that John Stuart Mill, "the greatest living master of the purely inductive philosophy," did not exert an important influence on physical, as well as mental and political science, and anthropology, in its broadest sense?

THE U. S. Fish Commission under Prof. S. F. Baird will spend the summer at Peak's Island, Portland Harbor. A large number of students and naturalists will assemble there, and the Commissioner's headquarters will form, as they have in the past, a most important school for the study of biology. A steam-tug has been provided by the government for dredging on an extended scale, and plans are on foot for deep-sea dredging.

THE "Scientific Correspondence" of Goethe was collected by Goethe himself, and will fill two volumes; it comprises the years 1812-32, though most of the letters appertain to 1822-27. There are letters addressed to Goethe by Blumenbach, Carus, Loder, Sömmering, Seebeck, d'Alton, Brandes, von Henning, Martius, Nees von Esenbeck, Purkinje, Wermburg, and Zschokke. It appears from them that Goethe kept up the most lively and detailed interest in the progress of science and natural history until the latest period of his life.—*The Academy*.

It is with much pleasure that we record the recent munificent donation of one hundred thousand dollars to the Museum of Comparative Zoology made by Mrs. Quincy Shaw, a daughter of Prof. Agassiz. We have never seen a statement of the permanent funds of the museum, but are confident that a dozen or more similar donations would not come amiss, for the expenses of such establishments are much greater than is generally supposed.

WE notice with regret that the aquarial car which was conveying the living fish, oysters and lobsters to the Pacific coast only succeeded in stocking the river at Omaha with such of the animals as survived the fall through the bridge. Query.—How about the strength of the bridges on "the great continental highway?"

THE professorship of Natural History in Ann Arbor, lately vacated by Professor Winchell, has been filled by the election of Professor Eugene W. Hilgard of the University of Mississippi, a gentleman of the highest attainments and especially known in the scientific world from his reports on the geology of the Gulf States.

PROF. N. S. SHALER of Harvard College has been appointed State Geologist of Kentucky, his native state. Prof. Shaler is for the present in England. We learn from the daily papers that he has accepted the situation.

A fine chance is offered to any enterprising naturalist who wishes to test by experiments the theory of cave life, as the present proprietors of the Mammoth Cave offer to sell the cave and all its contents for the sum of \$500,000.

THE distinguished botanist Wm. S. Sullivant died at Columbus, Ohio, on April 30th, aged 70 years.